sold. The paddies of the average farmer in Siaton and Zamboanguita are so small that they cannot produce sufficient rice to last the families through the year. About 23 per cent of the cultivated land is also occupied by coconut palms. In Pamplona is one of the largest coconut plantations in Negros; it is owned and managed by Americans. Generally, however, coconut plantings vary from 5 to 15 acres and are owned by Filipinos. Many families have a few coconut trees that provide their chief cash income. Coconut palms usually appear along the littoral where the sandy soils are too well-drained for other crops and the internal drainage from the Central Mountain range favors coconut cultivation. Coconuts, however, are frequently planted along field boundaries and extend toward the interior of many parts of this region.

Coconut palms begin to bear as early as five years after planting and often produce nuts when a century old. The Laguna variety is common in this region; it is an early-bearing tree that usually produces nuts after eight or ten years. The fresh coconut meat is dried under the sun or in crude, smoky ovens, tapahans. The dried meat is known as copra and is the chief export of Dumaguete port; in 1951 it amounted to more than $5,000,000. The prosperity of this region is closely tied to copra prices. When prices are high, for example, enrollment in both public and private schools rises; but when copra prices fall school enrollments decrease

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The sugar-producing areas of Negros were expanding. In 1836 less than 300 tons of sugar had been produced while thirty years later the production had increased to nearly 12,000 tons. The declaration of Iloilo city as a free port in 1855 stimulated the infant sugar industry. "The total value of exports leaving the port of Iloilo... jumped from ₱82,000 [$41,000] in 1858 to over ₱1,000,000 [$500,000] in 1863, with most of this increase in exports coming from the shipment of sugar from Negros."[111] In the same periods (the 1860's) the sugar haciendas of Negros began to develop; some of them covered several thousand acres and supported their owners in luxury.

The Justices of the Peace in Siaton

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The year following the division of Negros into two provinces (1891), the first justice of the peace was appointed in Siaton. In 1885 a royal decree, a "concession to public opinion," had provided for the appointment of a justice of the peace to every municipality. This office previously had been filled by the capitans. "When such persons [lawyers or others 'whose position and circumstances warrant it'] could not be found the petty governors

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[111] Wernstedt, op. cit., p. 79. Walker states that in the early 1900's Iloilo owed its existence largely to Negros' sugar industry. Walker, op. cit., p. 10.

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held, and at midnight Taft and his group left Dumaguete. 175*
Taft kept his word. The Negros Republic was dissolved and the provincial governments of Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental created. For the first time Negros' provinces were classified as civil provinces. Demetrio Larena was appointed civil governor of Negros Oriental.

Effective control by American forces of Bohol and Cebu was not accomplished until the last of 1901. Samar was one of the last islands to be pacified for in September, 1901, fifty American soldiers were ambushed and killed on the island.[160] In April, 1902, Batanga (Luzon) resistance collapsed and the Filipinos' fight for independence ended with an American victory.[161]

THE AMERICAN PERIOD (1898-1941)

The American period is an era of great expansion 175* 433 439
of Negros' sugar industry and population. The sugar-producing regions of Negros had suffered during the revolution. Political and military conflicts, local unrest, and a general paralysis of commerce discouraged the hacenderos from planting new crops. This period of indecision and stagnation lasted until 1909. Then the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act opened American markets to a

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[160] Henry F. Pringle, The Life and Times of William Howard Taft. New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1939, 2 vols., I, p. 198.

[161] Zaide, The Philippines Since the British Invasion, pp. 280-1.

limited amount (300,000 tons) of duty-free Philippine sugar; there were immediate increases in sugar production in the archipelago.[162] By 1921 the exporting of sugar had exceeded that of the Spanish period. With the inauguration of the quota system the output of Negros' sugar declined somewhat, but remained relatively stable until World War II.

Negros' population expansion was directly connected with the growth of the sugar industry. However, Panay, Cebu, and Bohol were becoming more overcrowded and Filipinos from these islands emigrated to Negros' less densely populared plains. Negros' population (excluding Siquijor) increased from 270,891 in 1887 to 509,766 in 1903.[163] In sixteen years the population of western Negros (approximately Negros Occidental province) had grown from 148,137 (1887) to 308,272 persons (1903) while the population of the eastern part of the island (approximately Negros Oriental) had expanded from 122,754 (probably including Siquijor) to 201,494 (155,471 excluding Siquijor). More people were settling in western than eastern Negros. With passing decades western Negros' population was to become nearly triple that of the eastern part of the island. An election

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[162] The 1913 Underwood Tariff Act, amending the Payne-Aldrich Act, permitting duty free entry of all Philippine products into the United States, irrespective of quantity, provided that not more than 20 per cent of the final product was of foreign origin or manufacture.

[163] Census of the Philippines: 1903, I, p. 87.

never sold there. The scarcity of fish may be somewhat atypical--although most residents claimed it was not--since the bonsod catches were small this year and the fish corrals destroyed earlier than usual. When the day's fish supply arrived in the marketplace, it was quickly sold; some days there were no fresh fish for sale. Since fish brings a higher price in Dumaguete even small amounts are taken to the city, draining Siaton of much of its fresh fish. For example, one afternoon a fish corral made a catch of more than thirty boxes of sardine. The owner sold a few boxes in Siaton, more from a sense of duty than for profit, at eleven dollars a box; the rest were sent to Dumaguete where they sold for thirteen dollars a box. As a result, whenever news comes to the poblacion that a large catch has been made, either in the bonsod or by netting, the people flock to the seashore to buy fish for their personal use or to sell in the local market.

FISH NETS IN SIATON

Since the last war abaca nets have replaced the cotton twine nets once widely used in Siaton; twine nets are very expensive owing to inflation. In the past many large twine nets used were made in Japan whereas today most of them are said to be imported from the United States. Nets made of cotton twine are called pokot or sigin; those made of abaca are called sahid or sinsoro.